



2001 Wetlands Reserve Program

Program Focus - The Wetland Reserve Program in Arkansas focuses on ecological, social, and economic benefits.

Restored wetlands are providing a great variety of ecological benefits such as migratory bird and shorebird habitat, increased floodwater storage, carbon sequestration, and sediment deposition areas.

Flood prone lands within the large river systems are a major focus. Crop failures due to extreme flooding are very common in these areas.

Demand on stressed water tables in the heavily irrigated areas of eastern Arkansas is reduced when acreage is taken out of production. In some cases, excessive irrigation has introduced chloride as a problem. WRP provides a land use option where chloride reduces cropping potential.

In many cases, placing lands in WRP is socially and economically redeeming as it allows families to keep land and pass it on to future generations. This eliminates the stigma of a landowner losing the family property and destroying family pride and esteem. Landowners are receiving increased income or recreational opportunities from hunting on WRP lands.

Over the life of WRP the program has disbursed approximately \$94,000,000 in Arkansas.

Arkansas Summary

Overview

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. Restoring, protecting and enhancing the functions and values of wetland ecosystems remain the focus of WRP in Arkansas. Specifically, the focus is narrowed in the Natural State to restoring bottomland hardwood forest ecosystems by reforestation and hydrology restoration.

Arkansas is currently ranked third in the nation in enrolled WRP acres. This equals; approximately 100,000 active acres of WRP lands enrolled with approximately 30,000 acres of shallow water habitat created and 70,000 acres of reforested lands.

Accomplishments

By placing agricultural lands into WRP, NRCS provides resting, loafing and foraging habitat for migratory waterfowl, songbirds, shorebirds, wading birds and other wetland species.

Arkansas NRCS is a national leader in developing new techniques for restoring and managing wetland complexes, using the latest technology to annually reforest 8,000 acres of bottomland hardwoods and restore hydrology on more than 5,000 acres.

The 2001 hydrology construction season was an especially productive time for Arkansas. Field staff completed a record 7,000 acres of shallow water habitat in a single construction year.

NRCS Arkansas takes great pride in contributing to the many species of water birds observed on WRP lands. Many of these species have not been reported since the turn of the century or have never been documented in the state.

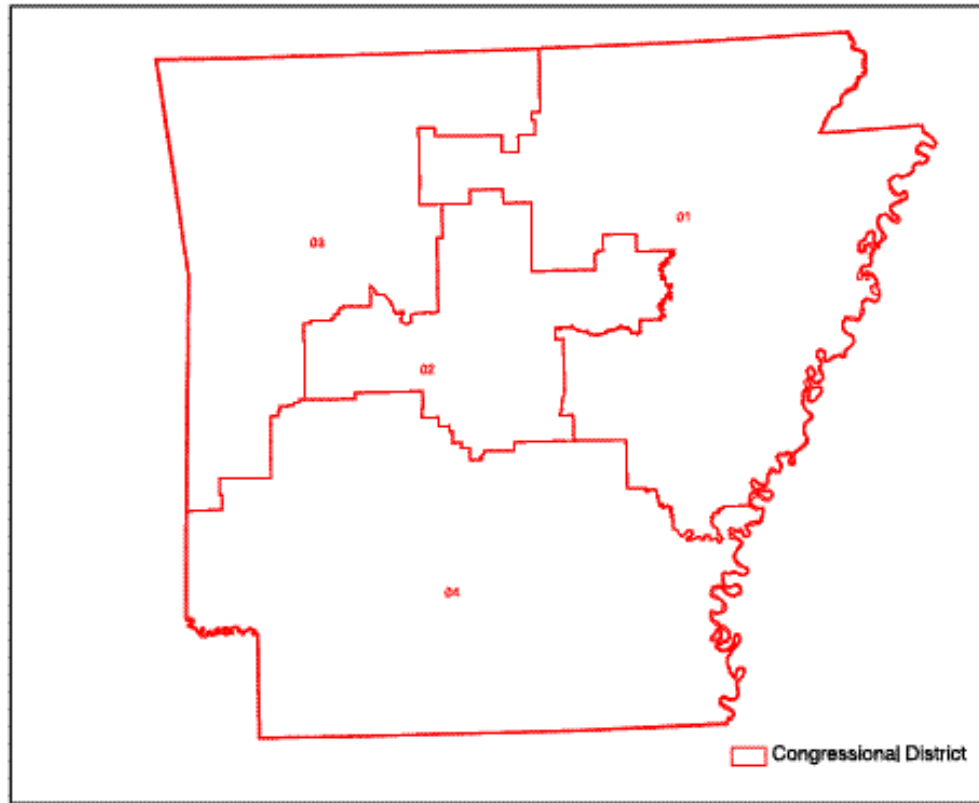
Program Benefits

The Arkansas State NRCS office has received reports of increased wildlife use in restored areas from NRCS District Conservationists, Arkansas Game and Fish Biologists and other scientifically oriented participants in the WRP process. There have been increased sightings of eagles and other raptors, black bear, ducks, geese, shorebirds and small fur bearing animals. In many cases, WRP lands form a valuable link between refuges and other areas that are conducive to wildlife management. Landowners are genuinely concerned with the depletion of the State's wetlands and are eager partners in the Arkansas restoration effort.

State Contact

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Arkansas Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District



Arkansas Dollars and Contracts

	Fiscal Year 2001		Cumulative Total (97-01)	
Congressional Districts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$8,910,472	32	\$48,138,660	173
District 2	\$493,200	4	\$11,851,920	26
District 3	\$0	0	\$42,780	1
District 4	\$908,235	3	\$34,417,440	45
State Totals	\$10,311,907	39	\$94,450,800	245

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